

THE SIEGE AND EVACUATION OF SAVANNAH, GEORGIA,  
IN DECEMBER 1864.

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# AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Confederate Survivors' Association,

IN

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA,

ON THE OCCASION OF ITS TWELFTH ANNUAL REUNION

ON

Memorial Day, April 26th, 1890,

BY

COL: CHARLES C. JONES, JR., LL.D.

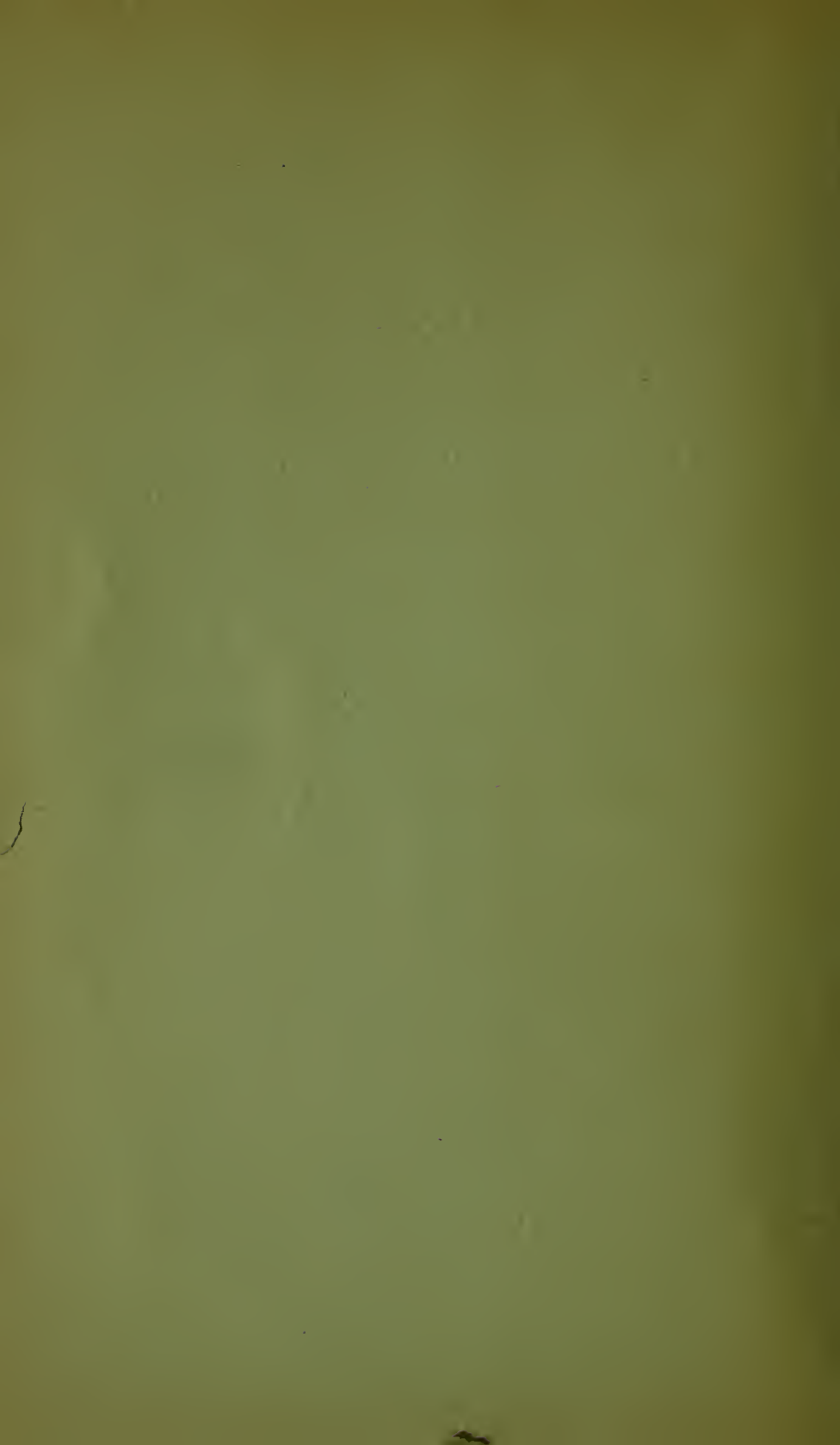
*President of the Association.*

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AUGUSTA, GA.  
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By the necrological record of each recurring year are we reminded, my Comrades, that the mortality among those who were actively engaged in the military and civil service of the Confederacy is augmenting in a rapidly increasing ratio. We had scarcely departed from this Hall, a twelve month ago, when we were apprised of the death near Paris, France, in absolute retirement and at a very advanced age, of the Hon. A. Dudley Mann who, during the war, was entrusted with an important diplomatic mission.

On the 31st of last May S. P. Moore—Surgeon general of the Confederate States—was overtaken by that gaunt foe whose grim advances in camp, in hospital, and in bloody battle he had, during more than four years of exposure, privation, and carnage, essayed to check.

On the 20th of the following month Colonel A. C. Myers—first Quarter-Master-General of the Confederacy—passed quietly away; and on the 25th of September Lieutenant General D. H. Hill,—the hero of Big Bethel, conspicuous for his gallantry at Seven Pines, Malvern Hill, Boonsboro, Chickamauga, and elsewhere,—the founder of *The Land we Love*,—an uncompromising defender of the impulses and acts of the South,—president of the Middle Georgia Military and Agricultural College at Milledgeville,—a brave soldier, capable educator, and Christian gentleman,—succumbed to the inroads of a protracted and painful disease.

Major General John C. Brown of Tennessee, a courageous

and trustworthy officer who, since the cessation of hostilities, was complimented with the chief-magistracy of his State, on the 18th of August answered the final summons. Two months later, another Confederate Major General, — H. D. Clayton of Alabama. — distinguished alike as a soldier, a judge, and a college president, — and Brigadier General E. A. Perry — some-time governor of Florida — ended their mortal careers.

During the month of November Colonel Alfred Rhett — whose name and valor are so intimately associated with the memorable defense of Fort Sumter, — the Hon. W. N. H. Smith, — Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina, and a prominent member from that State of the Confederate Congress, — and Senator Dortch — who also rendered valuable aid in moulding the legislation of the Confederacy, — joined the silent majority.

On the 1st of December Collett Leventhorpe, — in early life an officer of the 14th Regiment of Foot in her Majesty's service, and subsequently, for gallantry and efficient conduct advanced to the grade of Brigadier General in the Army of Northern Virginia, — peacefully closed his eyes at the home of his adoption in North Carolina.

Five days afterwards, surrounded by devoted friends, accompanied by the loves of Southern hearts, and amid the comforts of the metropolis of the South, President Jefferson Davis, — the noblest living embodiment of Confederate manhood, and the most distinguished representative of a cause which electrified the civilized world by the grandeur of its sacrifices, the dignity and rectitude of its aims, the nobility of its pursuit, and the magnitude and the brilliancy of the deeds performed in its support, — yielded his great spirit into the hands of the God who gave it. It was the privilege of this Association to render conspicuous honor to his memory; and, in a manner most emphatic and appropriate, to participate in the general grief and heartfelt adoration which pervaded the entire territory once claimed by the Confederacy.

On the third of February the Hon: William W. Boyce — a member from South Carolina of the Confederate Congress, and one of the framers and signers of the Confederate Constitution, — died at an advanced age in Fairfax County, Virginia; and, during the month of March the Hon: William E. Smith,

—at first in the field, and then a representative from Georgia in the Confederate Congress, —and Major General Jones M. Withers, from Alabama, entered into rest.

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Within the circle of our immediate companionship we chronicle the deaths of *H. L. Sponsler*,—veterinary surgeon in Cobb's Legion of Cavalry, —on the 9th of last June: of *Elmore A. Dunbar*,—color bearer of the 63rd regiment Georgia Infantry —on the 24th of the same month: of *Charles N. Bignon*,—private in company B. Capers' Battalion, —on the 7th of October: of the soldierly *J. O. Clarke*, —lieutenant colonel of the 1st regiment Georgia Infantry —on the 6th of December: of *Charles M. Peck*, second lieutenant and drill-master C. S. A. —on the 4th of February last: and, sixteen days afterwards, of *James Kelly*,—private in the 7th regiment of Georgia Cavalry, Young's brigade.

Although they passed

“Into the eternal shadow  
That girds our life around,  
Into the infinite silence  
Wherewith Death's shore is bound,”

to our welcoming vision on this Memorial Day

“They come transfigured back  
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,  
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays  
Of Morn on their white shields of expectation.”

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The united and strenuous efforts of Generals Wheeler, Cobb, Smith, and McLaws, —aided by Generals Beauregard and Hardee — were powerless to arrest the devastating march of General Sherman's columns through the heart of Georgia; and the Federal army, nearly sixty thousand strong, —exclusive of an ample complement of field artillery and cavalry, —on

the 10th of December 1864 came into position before the Confederate works recently erected to cover the land approaches to the City of Savannah. Although every attempt had been made to obstruct the advance of the enemy and to concentrate a force sufficient for the protection of the commercial metropolis of Georgia, such was the pressure upon the Confederacy, and so painful the lack of available troops, that at the inception and during the progress of the siege there were within the Confederate lines around that city only about ten thousand men fit for duty. More than a third of these consisted of Reserves and Georgia State troops, while strong details were employed in garrisoning the forts and fixed batteries along the water front. In anticipation of General Sherman's arrival on the coast the Federal war vessels had multiplied in the vicinity of Savannah, and their demonstrations became more frequent and more forcible. The City of Oglethorpe lay between the upper and the nether millstone, with no hope of relief from any quarter.

Until General Sherman, abandoning his base at Atlanta, pointed his banners toward the coast, the attention of the Confederate engineers in the Military District of Georgia had been chiefly directed to the construction of batteries and strong lines for the defense of the water approaches to Savannah. So judiciously located were they, and so efficiently armed, that the Federals in this direction were thoroughly kept at bay.

Commencing at Red Bluff on the Carolina shore, a series of advanced works extended across the Savannah river, along St. Augustine Creek, by the way of Whitemarsh Island, Thunderbolt Bluff, the Isle of Hope, Beaulieu, and Rose Dew, until it rested upon the Great Ogeechee river.

As, during the siege few changes were made in the armament of those fixed batteries, the following enumeration of guns in position along the water front of the Savannah defenses may be accepted as substantially correct.

Red-Bluff battery, — an enclosed work on the Carolina shore armed with two 24-pounder rifle guns, one 8-inch columbiad, one 24, and two 12-pounder howitzers — constituted the left of the line. At the extremity of the Bay in the City of Savannah a 32-pounder gun was planted.

On Hutchinson's island was an earth work mounting three 32-pounder guns.

The armament of Fort Jackson consisted of two 8-inch columbiads, two 32-pounder rifle guns, and three 32-pounder naval guns.

The other batteries for the defense of the Savannah river proper were Cheves, Lawton, Lee, and Fort Boggs.

Three 32-pounder guns and two 10-inch columbiads constituted the armament of Battery Cheves.

That of Battery Lawton was stronger, consisting of one 32-pounder rifle gun, one 42-pounder smooth bore, two 8-inch and two 10-inch columbiad guns.

The most powerful work on the Savannah river was Battery Lee, which mounted two 10-inch mortars, two 10-inch and three 8-inch columbiads, one 42, and one 32-pounder gun, and two 24-pounder howitzers.

Fort Bartow, commanding St. Augustine creek not far from its confluence with Savannah river, was a substantially constructed, enclosed earth work mounting sixteen guns, to wit: one 10-inch columbiad, two 8-inch naval shell guns, two 8-inch columbiads, two 24-pounder rifle guns, one 12-pounder rifle gun, two 8-pounder and two 6-pounder smooth bore guns, three 3-inch rifle guns, and one boat howitzer. The water battery at Causton's bluff, in advance of Fort Bartow, was armed with two 32-pounder smooth bore guns.

For the protection of the approaches by way of Whitemarsh island a battery was located at Turner's Point mounting three 10-inch columbiads, one 20-pounder Parrott gun, and two 12-pounder howitzers; and another at Gibson's Point which was armed with two 8-inch siege howitzers and two 32-pounder guns. Across the island was thrown up a substantial line of field works mounting seven 32-pounder guns, one 4.62-inch, and one 3-inch rifle gun. Near the head of the causeway leading to Causton's Bluff were located some lunettes and angles for field pieces.

At Greenwich was a battery of three 32-pounder guns.

At Thunderbolt was a succession of well traversed earth works, mounting one 10-inch columbiad, two 8-inch columbiads, two 8-inch shell guns, one 42-pounder rifle, one 42-pounder smooth bore, and six 32-pounder guns. The batteries

on the Isle of Hope were distributed as follows: at Grimbail's Point a small work armed with one 32-pounder; at Grimbail's House another, mounting two guns of like calibre, and at the Church Lot a more formidable work mounting two 8-inch columbiads and two 32-pounder guns. Near Skidaway bridge was a *tete du pont*, prepared for the reception of siege pieces or light artillery.

The point at Beaulieu being an important one, was strongly fortified and provided with one 8-inch and two 10-inch columbiads, two 42 and three 32-pounder guns. A light battery was also stationed within supporting distance.

Rose Dew battery was armed with three 10-inch columbiads, one 10-inch mortar, and one 32 and one 18-pounder rifle gun.

Colonel Edward C. Anderson was, during the siege, assigned to the general command of these fixed batteries. The guns in these positions were supplied with an average of rather more than one hundred rounds of ammunition to the piece. As additional obstructions to an ascent of the Savannah river by the enemy, cribs, filled with brick and stone, had been sunk in in the channel below the forts and under cover of their guns. Below the Thunderbolt battery the river was impeded by quantities of live-oak logs.

Constituting the right of this exterior line designed and held for the protection of Savannah, and erected at Genesis' point on the right bank of the Great Ogeechee river, Fort McAllister effectually commanded the channel of that stream, shielded the important railroad bridge near Way's station, and preserved the rice plantations in its neighborhood from molestation and demoralization. From the day of its construction, which was coeval with the earliest Confederate defenses on the Georgia coast, to the hour of its capture on the 13th of December, 1864, it subserved purposes most conducive to the general welfare, and on various occasions gallantly repulsed well sustained naval attacks from the enemy.

Although the mantle of decay is spread above its deserted magazines and rank weeds are choking its vacant gun-chambers, the heroic memories which it has bequeathed and the noble part it sustained in the Confederate struggle for independence will not be forgotten in the lapse of years or lightly esteemed in the record of truth and valor. No name is more

proudly remembered on the Georgia coast than that of this now, almost obliterated earth work. Seven times did it successfully withstand the attacks of Federal gun-boats and iron-clads attempting its demolition. During its bombardment of the 27th of January, 1863, for the first time in the history of naval warfare were 15-inch guns used in the effort to reduce a shore battery; and here was demonstrated the ability of sand-parapets to resist the disintegrating effect of shot and shell projected from guns of the heaviest calibre. After the attack of the 3rd of March, 1863, in which its bermuda covered parapets for seven long hours were rained upon by four monitors, three 13-inch mortar schooners, and five gun-boats, the enemy never renewed his efforts for its reduction; and the Confederate flag floated proudly from its parade until that hour when it went down amid the smoke and carnage of General Hazen's assault.

The mission of this work was to prevent the ascent of the Great Ogeechee river by the enemy, and to this end were its guns disposed. The rear of the fort was protected by a heavy entrenchment, provided at intervals with ramps for field artillery, not with the hope of offering successful resistance to any serious investment from the land side, but for the purpose of repelling any sudden assault which might be launched by expeditions from the fleet. Torpedoes, planted in the river under the guns of the battery, materially contributed to its protection; and, late in the fall of 1864, sub terra shells were disposed in rear of the fort.

Just prior to the siege of Savannah the armament of Fort McAllister consisted of the following guns: one 10-inch mortar, one 8-inch and two 10-inch columbiads, one 42-pounder gun, one 32 pounder rifle and one 32-pounder smooth bore gun, one 24-pounder howitzer, two 12-pounder mountain howitzers, and six 6-pounder field guns. In the magazines was a supply of rather more than one hundred and fifty rounds of ammunition to the piece. Captain Clinch's light battery was stationed in the neighborhood to act as a support, and to occupy, as the emergency arose, some light field works which had been thrown up at advantageous points along the banks of the river between the fort and the railroad crossing.

In anticipation of the early isolation of Fort McAllister, and

in recognition of the fact that so soon as General Sherman's army should have fully enveloped the western lines of Savannah no communication could be had with nor relief offered to this post, on the morning of the 8th of December 1000 pounds of bacon, 2250 pounds of hard bread, and other supplies, amounting in all to thirty-two days' rations for two hundred men, were issued from Savannah and safely conveyed to the fort. Extra issues of 40 gallons of whiskey, 40 gallons of molasses, 50 pounds of candles, and some soap and salt were received at the same time.

The following day fifteen days' rations were added to the above, so that the fort was amply provisioned.

Major George W. Anderson was in command, and the garrison numbered about one hundred and fifty men.

In consequence of the withdrawal of the small infantry force which, under Coln. Fizer, had been disputing the advance of Gen. Osterhaus's column on the right bank of the Great Ogeechee river, and by the retreat of the Confederate cavalry, under Coln. Hood, in the direction of Liberty county, Fort McAllister was, on the morning of the 11th of December, left in an absolutely isolated condition, without any reasonable expectation of support or relief.

That the garrison was not recalled in time within the lines of Savannah and the post seasonably evacuated, can be explained only on the supposition that the Confederate commander hoped and believed by a bold retention of this outpost, and as strong a display of resistance as practicable, General Sherman, even at that late day, might be induced to avoid Savannah and seek some other and more facile point on the coast for communicating with the Federal fleet.

In addition to these exterior defenses, a line of formidable earth works, within easy range of each other, in many places connected by curtains, and armed with siege and field guns, was thrown up for the immediate protection of Savannah. Commencing at Fort Boggs on the Savannah river, and thence extending south and west in a semi-circular form, enveloping the city at distances varying from one to two and a quarter miles, it terminated at the Springfield plantation swamp. The principal fortifications in this line were Fort Boggs, — mounting fourteen guns, some of them quite heavy and commanding

Savannah river,—Fort Brown, near the Catholic cemetery, armed with eleven guns—and Fort Mercer having a battery of nine guns. Between Springfield plantation swamp—where the right of the line rested just beyond Laurel Grove cemetery,—and Fort Mercer, were eighteen lunettes, mounting in the aggregate twenty guns. Connecting Fort Mercer with Fort Brown was a *cremeilliere* line with nine salients, mounting in the aggregate eight guns. Between Fort Brown and Fort Boggs were seven lunettes armed with eight guns. These works were well supplied with magazines. It will be noted that the armament of these city lines consisted of seventy pieces of artillery of various calibres, among which, 32, 24, 18, 12 and 6 pounder guns predominated. A considerable supply of ammunition was kept on hand in the magazines. Such was the condition of this city line in the month of October, 1864. When, however, it became necessary to arm the western line for the protection of the city against the Federal army, many guns were withdrawn from this line and placed in battery on the western defenses. In fact, the principal supply of guns and ammunition was hence derived. The first assignment of guns for location on the western line was made by the speaker, as Chief of Artillery, on the 20th of November. Major General Lafayette McLaws was then in command of the district of Georgia; Major John McCrady was acting as chief engineer, and Captain L. Jacqueline Smith as ordnance officer. When Lieut. General Hardee arrived and assumed command, Colonel J. J. Clarke discharged the duties of chief engineer, and Lieut. Col. J. R. Waddy was announced as chief ordnance officer.

So much for the preparation which had been made by the Confederates for the protection of the eastern and southern approaches to Savannah.

Prior to the development of General Sherman's plans, the likelihood of an attack from the interior seemed so remote that little attention had been bestowed upon any defense in that quarter. So soon, however, as it became apparent that the Federal Army was seeking communication with the coast by way of Savannah, every available resource was utilized in occluding the western approaches to the city.

An advanced line was selected by the Confederate engineers which contemplated the retention of such portion of the

Charleston and Savannah rail road as lay within the limits of Georgia, and the protection of its bridge across the Savannah river. Extending southwardly, and having Monteith swamp in its front, its left was guarded by the Great Ogeechee swamp.

Detached field works were quickly prepared at important points, and some light artillery and infantry hastened into position. The principal roads leading to Savannah, and the main avenues of approach were blocked by felling timber across them, and it was hoped that these obstructions would induce the Federal general to turn aside and seek some objective on the coast other than Savannah.

The paucity of the Confederate forces, the overwhelming strength of the enemy, the length and insecurity of the line, later and more careful surveys proving localities to be practicable which were deemed impassable, the Federal ability by means of well appointed pioneer corps in a short time to remove all hindrances to an advance, and the facility with which detached earth works, constituting the principal defenses, could be flanked, induced the evacuation of this line shortly after a serious demonstration was made against it by the enemy.

The interior line, and that persistently held by the Confederates during the siege, commenced at Williamson's plantation on the Savannah river. Thence, having the rice fields in its front and trending southwardly along the crest of the high-ground, it crossed the Central rail road, followed the western slope of Daly's farm, passed through Lawton's plantation, confronted the Silk-Hope rice fields, and, pursuing the left shore of Salt-Creek marshes and the Little Ogeechee, rested near the Atlantic and Gulf rail way bridge across that river. This line was well located, and was rendered formidable by the succession of marish lands and well-nigh impassable swamps in its front. To increase these physical obstructions and add to the impracticability of these low grounds, the river dam at Williamson's plantation was cut so as to allow the water at high tide to flow freely into and submerge the rice-fields. This supply, when fully obtained, was securely held. The water from the Savannah and Ogeechee canal, from Gould's swamp, and from the reserves on Shaw's and Lawton's plantations were made to contribute to the overflow. The rice fields on Owens' plantation were flooded from

the Silk-Hope back-water, and Salt Creek was dammed at the bridge on the Savannah and Darien road to retain the water in case the enemy should cut the banks. All means were utilized which could contribute to swell the inundation, and thus the entire front of the Confederate line from the Savannah River to Salt Creek was submerged to a depth varying from three to six feet. Below the bridge on the Savannah and Darien road, the marshes of Salt Creek and of Little Ogeechee river afforded substantial protection.

So much for the natural advantages of the line.

The artificial defenses consisted of detached works, armed with siege and field pieces, located at prominent points commanding the established avenues of approach to the city, crowning causeways and private crossings over these lowlands, and offering resistance where the swamps were practicable.

The principal batteries were established in the following positions —

In advance of the extreme right of the Confederate line and across the flooded rice-field on Williamson's plantation was a heavy earth work the left of which rested upon Williamson's canal just beyond the graveyard,— which was converted into a redan,— and the right upon the Savannah river this side of the negro quarters. This was the most elaborate fortification on the line. Its armament consisted of ten guns, mostly of light calibre, and it was garrisoned by two hundred infantry of the Georgia militia, Pruden's artillery company, and the Georgia Cadets, Major Capers, all under command of Colonel Hill of the Georgia State forces. This work was open in its rear toward the Savannah river. The lunette, which constituted its prominent feature, was approached by a covered way, and in it was located an ample bomb-proof made by cutting a deep ditch from the salient to the bastion line. This ditch was crossed at right angles by another of similar dimensions, commencing and terminating at the flank angles respectively. These ditches were then roofed with timber and covered with the earth removed in making the excavations. Thus was constructed not only a commodious bomb proof, but also an excellent magazine. Semi-lunar in outline, the enclosed lunette constituted its centre, with a redan on the left and a semi-circular work on the right. The infantry line and curtains connecting these were

substantial in character and showed a double front. The interior front commanded the terre-plein in case the enemy should attack from Hutchinson's island. Sand bags were used instead of head logs, and they were so arranged as to permit the garrison, while firing, to be entirely under cover. The exterior front was protected by a double frieze of stakes and fence-rails planted firmly in the ground and interlaced with iron wire. Such was Fort Hardeman, planned by and constructed under the supervision of Lieut. Col. B. W. Frobel, of the engineers. The labor was performed by the Georgia militia and a detail of negroes. On the 9th and 10th of December the enemy attempted to carry this work, but the assaults in each instance were feeble and were easily repulsed.

The right of the Confederate line developed into a well traversed field work, mounting three 32-pounder guns, resting upon the Savannah river and designed to cover Williamson's river dam and its approaches. The preservation of this dam was essential to the retention of the water by means of which the overflow, to which we have alluded, was in a considerable degree accomplished. Between this battery and the Augusta road several pieces of artillery were posted in lunettes.

At the crossing of the Augusta road a substantial earth work was constructed, mounting three heavy guns, with field pieces on the flanks.

Battery McBeth, located at the intersection of the Louisville turnpike and the Central rail road with the Confederate line, was armed with three 32-pounder guns on barbette carriages, and two 24-pounder Blakely rifle guns on siege carriages.

In supporting distance, and about halfway between the Louisville road and the Savannah and Ogeechee canal, were posted a 12-pounder Napoleon gun and a 6-pounder bronze field piece. Along the right bank of the canal, and in confirmation of the line running through the woods between the canal and the high ground on Daly's farm, were distributed a 12-pounder field piece, a 12-pounder howitzer, and five 6-pounder guns. The line in front of Daly's farm was armed with one 8-inch siege howitzer, a 20-pounder Parrott gun, two 12-pounder Napoleon guns, one 12-pounder howitzer, and one 3-inch rifle gun.

Following the line in the direction of the left, a 12-pounder Napoleon gun was put in position at the head of Shaw's dam.

Three 12-pounder howitzers at Battery Acee commanded Shaw's rice field, and one 12-pounder howitzer and two 6-pounder guns were stationed on the Habersham old road. Between Battery Acee and the Habersham road was a 12-pounder gun.

In rear of Lawton's barn and at the head of the causeway crossing his rice fields stood Battery Barnes with two 32-pounder guns, two 12-pounder Napoleons, and one 12-pounder howitzer. Six hundred yards to the right of this battery was a 6-pounder gun commanding another causeway, and some five hundred yards beyond and in the direction of the Habersham road was posted a 6-pounder gun covering the approach by still another crossing.

At Pine-Point battery, opposite the rice fields of the Hon. George S. Owens's Silk Hope plantation, six field guns were embrasured; and Battery Jones, on the old Savannah and Darien road, where it crosses Salt creek, was armed with two 32-pounder garrison guns, one 32-pounder carronade, one 20-pounder Parrott, and four 12-pounder Napoleons.

On Barclay's plantation, at the extreme left of the line, several field guns were posted for the protection of the Atlantic and Gulf railroad bridge over the Little Ogeechee river.

In addition to the guns enumerated, field pieces were distributed at other advantageous points, and ramps were constructed at irregular intervals for the guns of the light batteries which were acting as a movable support.

The following light batteries had been concentrated for the defence of Savannah.

|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Terrell Artillery,   | 4 12-pounder Napoleon guns. |
| 2. Regular Light Battery,   | 2 12-pounder " "            |
| [One section absent with the cavalry }<br>under General Wheeler.] |                             |
| 3. Anderson's Light Battery,                                      | 4 12-pounder " "            |
| 4. Barnwell's " "   | 4 12-pounder " "            |
| 5. German " "   | 2 12-pounder " "            |
| [One section absent with the cavalry }<br>south of the Altamaha.] |                             |
| 6. Abell's " "  | { 2 12-pounder " "          |
|   | { 2 12-pounder howitzers.   |
| 7. Pruden's " "   | 4 6-pounder guns.           |
| 8. Daniel's " "   | 4 12-pounder Napoleon guns. |
| 9. Guerard's " "  | { 2 12-pounder " "          |
|   | { 2 12-pounder howitzers.   |

|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 10. Hanleiter's Light Battery,                        | { 2 12-pounder howitzers. |
|   | { 2 6-pounder guns.       |
| 11. Major Hamilton's battalion<br>of light artillery, | { 2 12 pounder howitzers. |
|   | { 2 10 pounder Parrots.   |
|   | { 8 3 and 3½ inch rifles. |
| Total,  | <hr/> 48 guns.            |

These light artillery companies were distributed as the necessities of the line demanded. The cannoniers were either actively engaged in working the guns in fixed position, or were, with their field pieces, prepared to move at any moment to such portions of the line as were seriously threatened.

Only two of these light batteries were held in reserve.

Near the Central Railroad depot two 18-pounder garrison guns, one 8-inch siege howitzer, and a 42-pounder carronade were mounted.

Wherever the nature of the ground permitted, the fixed batteries on the western line were connected by infantry breast-works, supplemented by ramps for field artillery, which the troops industriously strengthened from day to day as opportunity occurred. The siege and garrison guns employed in arming this line had been withdrawn from the city lines constructed by General Mercer in 1862 and 1863. In anticipation of the siege, General George W. Rains—commanding the Augusta Arsenal, gun-foundries and powder-works—and the ordnance officer at Charleston extended valuable aid; so that apart from the ammunition in the chests of the light batteries, lodged in the temporary magazines along the line, and in the hands of the infantry, a liberal supply of ordnance stores was accumulated in reserve. In fact, during the progress of the siege there was no lack of ammunition; the troops and batteries being at all times promptly and sufficiently served. It may be fairly stated however, that as a precautionary measure its expenditure both by the artillery and infantry was made the subject of a special order from head quarters enjoining economy and caution.

The right of the western line extending from the Savannah river at Williamson's plantation to within about one hundred feet of the Central rail road crossing, garrisoned by the Georgia militia and the State line troops, was under the command

of Major General Gustavus W. Smith. Twenty guns were in position on his front.

The command of Major General Lafayette McLaws embraced the batteries at the Central rail road and Louisville road crossings, and extended from that point to the head of Shaw's dam. On his front twenty-nine pieces of artillery were posted.

Major General A. R. Wright commanded the left, extending from Shaw's dam all the way round to the Atlantic and Gulf railway bridge over the Little Ogeechee river. Thirty-two pieces of artillery were in position on his front.

Lieutenant General William J. Hardee was in general command, with his head-quarters in the city of Savannah.

By the evening of the 9th of December, such Confederate forces as could be concentrated were assigned positions along the newly constructed western lines. Care had been taken to remove all serviceable rolling stock belonging to the several rail roads converging at Savannah.

In coming into position before Savannah the Federal corps were distributed as follows: General Williams's 20th Corps held the left of the Union line resting upon the Savannah river near Williamson's plantation, in advance of Pipe-maker's creek, its right extending across the Charleston and Savannah rail road to the Central rail road, where it joined the left of General Jeff. C. Davis's 14th Army Corps.

This 14th Army Corps, constituting the right of the left wing, extended from the Central rail road to the 17th Army Corps, whose left rested beyond the Savannah and Ogeechee canal, near Lawton's plantation.

Shortly after this development of the left wing, the right, under Major General Howard, came into the following position. The 17th Corps, commanded by General Frank P. Blair, Jr., lay next beyond and to the right of the 14th Army Corps, while General Osterhaus's 15th Corps, extending to the Atlantic and Gulf rail road near station number one, formed the extreme right of the Federal investment.

After crossing Ebenezer creek on the 8th of December, General Kilpatrick concentrated his cavalry on the Monteith road, ten miles south of Springfield; and, until the 13th, moved in rear of the 17th Army corps, with detachments covering the rear of the other army corps.

King's bridge having been burnt by the Confederates, Kilpatrick crossed the Great Ogeechee on a pontoon bridge on the afternoon of the 13th, and moved in heavy force through the counties of Bryan and Liberty seeking to communicate with the Federal fleet by way of Kilkenny bluff and Sunbury. Returning on the 16th, he went into camp in the vicinity of King's bridge, picketing and plundering the country south of the Ogeechee.

The attempt of Coln. Atkins, with two thousand cavalry, supported by a division of infantry under General Mower, to destroy the railway bridge over the Altamaha river was thwarted. Upon the first appearance of the enemy the Confederate cavalry, stationed at detached points along the coast south of the Great Ogeechee river, hastily retreated beyond the Altamaha, leaving the region lately occupied by them a prey to the daily incursions of the Federal cavalry.

The Federal artillery was distributed at convenient intervals and at suitable locations along the line, but was chiefly massed opposite the Confederate redoubts on our right, in front of Daly's farm, the battery on Lawton's plantation, and the work at Salt creek bridge. The work last mentioned, known as Battery Jones, was subjected to an incessant fire during the continuance of the siege.

Although severely repulsed at Honey Hill on the 30th of November, the Federals, advancing from the South Carolina coast during the early part of December, made several unsuccessful attempts to obtain possession of the Charleston and Savannah railroad with a view to strengthening the operations of General Sherman and compassing the isolation of the Confederate garrison in Savannah.

The western lines, about which the chief interest concentrates, were begun so soon as it was ascertained that General Sherman had inaugurated his movement from Atlanta, and were constructed as rapidly as available labor and means would permit. The credit of their location is due to Major John McCrady, then chief engineer of the district, under the direction of Major General Lafayette McLaws. On the 20th of November the first assignment of guns was made for their armament, and others were hastened into position as rapidly as they could be withdrawn from the city lines and other localities from which they could be spared.

Troops for the occupation of these lines commenced taking their posts on the 7th of December, and at once entered, with much activity, upon the task of strengthening them and extending the infantry cover.

The troops of Major General Gustavus W. Smith, numbering about 2,000 muskets, were disposed on the right from the Savannah river, almost to the crossing of the Central rail road—a front of about two miles and a half. His right was commanded by Brigadier General Anderson, and his left by Brigadier General Carswell. The two regiments of the State line took position near the Louisville road, and the First brigade of militia near the Augusta road. The intermediate line was occupied by the battalion of Cadets. The second and third brigades of Georgia militia held the line from the Augusta road to the bank of the Savannah river; and Fort Hardeman, the advanced work across Williamson's rice field, was garrisoned by Colonel Hill with a detachment from the Third Georgia brigade, a company of Cadets, and Pruden's militia battery. A portion of Anderson's Confederate light battery, and a part of Major Hamilton's battalion of light artillery were conveniently posted in support.

Major General Lafayette McLaws's front, forming the centre of the line, commenced about one hundred feet to the right of the Central rail road crossing and terminated at the swamp to the left of the Daly farm. Measured along the entrenchments, its length was about three miles and three-quarters. His right was commanded by Brigadier General Baker, and his left by Brigadier General Lewis. General Baker's forces consisted of North Carolina troops and Georgia and South Carolina artilleryists. Those under General Lewis embraced Worthen's North Carolina battalion, detachments of the 4th Tennessee and the 12th South Carolina Cavalry, the 2d, 4th and 9th Kentucky Mounted Infantry, the 3d battalion Georgia Reserves, Major Cook's Athens battalion, the 5th regiment Georgia Reserves, and the 1st regiment Georgia Regulars.

Daniel's light battery, Abell's light battery, and sections of the light batteries of Captains Barnwell and Wagner supported this portion of the line. The troops on General McLaws' front numbered about 3,750 men.

Major General A. R. Wright, on the 11th of December, was

assigned to the command of the left of the western lines extending from the Daly farm, or Telfair swamp, to the Atlantic and Gulf rail road bridge over the Little Ogeechee river—a distance of some seven miles. He had under him Brigadier General Hugh W. Mercer, commanding his right from the Telfair swamp to a point near Lawton's house, and Brigadier General John K. Jackson, commanding his left from the vicinity of Lawton's barn to the Atlantic and Gulf rail road crossing over the little Ogeechee river. This front of Major General Wright was irregular, being interrupted by dense woods and impracticable swamps. It was held by about 2,700 men; twelve hundred under Brigadier General Mercer, and the rest under Brigadier General Jackson. General Mercer's command consisted of Colonel Browne's local brigade (composed of Major Jackson's Augusta battalion, Major Adams's Athens battalion, and a regiment of local troops under Colonel Nisbet), Brooks' foreign battalion, a detachment of the 55th Georgia regiment, and Capt. Barnes's company of artillerists from Augusta. This force was disposed as follows: Lieutenant Colonel R. B. Nisbet occupied the line from Battery Richardson to Battery Barnwell. Griffins detachment of the 55th Georgia regiment supported batteries Wheeler and Simpkins, and Jackson's Augusta battalion of local infantry occupied the line from the last named work to Battery Barnes which was held by Augusta artillerists under Captain George T. Barnes. Brooks's foreign battalion was posted near the left of Battery Barnes.

Brigadier General Jackson's command was composed of Colonel Von Zinken's local troops, drawn from the Confederate arsenals and work-shops of Columbus and elsewhere in the State of Georgia, detachments from General Ferguson's cavalry brigade, dismounted, and local reserves from Savannah. Brooks' light battery was stationed at Battery Jones, at the crossing of the old Savannah and Darien stage road over Salt Creek, and Captain Guerard's light battery, sections of Maxwell's and Barnwell's light batteries, and a detachment of Major Hamilton's artillery battalion supported this line of General Wright.

In the defense of this western line the following members of this Association actively participated, viz: Col. T. G. Barrett, on ordnance duty; Major J. V. H. Allen, Major George T.

Jackson, Captain George T. Barnes, Captain John W. Clark, Surgeon DeSaussure Ford, Lieutenant Charles Spaeth, Lieutenant James L. Gow, and Berry Benson. Chaplain Weed and Charles A. Harper were present with the signal corps.

Every effort was made, by the erection of batteries and infantry entrenchments, by digging rifle pits and constructing substantial covers, by felling trees in its front, and by flooding all approaches, to render this western line as formidable as the labor and materials at command would permit. Its efficiency will be conceded when it is remembered that for ten days it kept General Sherman's formidable army at bay. And yet, thirteen miles long, as it was, and held by scarcely more than a skirmish line strengthened at intervals, it must be admitted that if the Federals had massed their forces for a determined assault, they could, at any time during the continuance of the siege, have carried it. With an army more than six times greater than that of the Confederates, and this Confederate force composed in large part of detailed men, reserves, militia, and boys unused to action, it seems marvellous that General Sherman should have contented himself with sitting down before our lines,—erecting counter batteries—engaging in artillery duels and sharp-shooting—feeling for weak points day after day—after the capture of Fort McAllister making arrangements for the transportation of heavy guns with which to shell Savannah at great distance over the heads of her defenders—and finally suffering the garrison to withdraw by pontoon bridges and canal banks to the Carolina shore.

Had he indicated that activity and energy demanded by the situation, the probabilities are that he could have captured the entire Confederate army. The evacuation of Savannah and the subsequent seizure of many thousand bales of cotton afforded the Federal general an opportunity for a festive interchange of dispatches with the President of the United States, in which his famous "Christmas present" figures largely; but he pillaged a nest from which the eagle had flown, and all the balderdash which has been written and spoken about this vaunted "march to the sea" can never, in the clear light of history, cover up or excuse the lack of dash and the want of military skill betrayed by General Sherman, with the formidable force at his command, in permitting the Confederate garrison to retire unmolested by

a route so precarious in its character, and by a flank movement which could easily have been frustrated by a single division.

Anticipating the retreat of the Confederates, the Federal commander did throw a considerable force on the left bank of the Savannah river — particularly upon the upper end of Hutchinson's island and upon Argyle island — with instructions to intercept the line of communication with the high ground in Carolina. In the attempt to carry these orders into effect the enemy encountered continuous and bloody resistance in the rice fields and along the dams. As the retention of this route was essential to the ultimate safety of the troops employed in the defense of Savannah, General Wheeler's available forces, assisted by General P. M. B. Young's command and such South Carolina light batteries as could be spared from points along the line of the Charleston and Savannah rail road, were concentrated for its protection. By these troops all efforts of the enemy to move upon and possess this avenue of retreat were stubbornly resisted and successfully frustrated. In these skirmishes on the left bank of the Savannah, and in the heavy fighting for the retention of this route, Vice-President Eve of this Association displayed conspicuous gallantry and rendered important service.

The venerable and brave Commodore Josiah Tattnall — commanding the naval forces at this station — afforded such assistance as the nature of the case and the means at hand justified.

It lies not within the compass of this address to enumerate the details of the siege, which, for ten days, was closely maintained. An incessant cannonade was supplemented at various points by sharp shooting and musketry firing. The artillery duels were particularly fierce at Battery Jones, at Pine-Point Battery, at the redoubts crowning the high grounds of the plantations of Lawton and Daly, at the Central rail road crossing, and at Williamson's place. On more than one occasion the Federals demonstrated in force and attempted to carry the Confederate works, but suffered repulse. Protected by their entrenchments, the Confederates sustained comparatively few casualties.

On the afternoon of the 13th of December Brigadier General Hazen, with the Second Division of the 15th Army Corps, by a rapid assault swept over the abattis and rear defenses of Fort

McAllister and compassed its capture with a loss to his command of one hundred and thirty-four killed and wounded. In the language of this victorious officer, the fighting was desperate and deadly; and, when overwhelmed by the enveloping forces, the Confederates contested every inch of ground within the fort, finally retreating to the bomb-proofs "from which they still fought, and only succumbed as each man was individually overpowered."

Upon the fall of this work General Sherman acquired full control of the Great Ogeechee river and was thus enabled to communicate freely with the Federal fleet and establish a convenient base of supplies for his army, then sadly in need of provisions for man and beast. The further retention of Savannah was rendered impracticable, and the salvation of its garrison became the problem of the hour. General Hardee's instructions from General Beauregard were to hold Savannah only so long as, in his judgment, it might be advisable to do so; and that whenever it became necessary to decide between a sacrifice of the garrison or the city, to preserve the former for operation elsewhere.

A conference between Generals Sherman and Foster and Admiral Dahlgren resulted in an agreement that the Admiral would speedily engage the Confederate batteries at Turner's Point, Rose Dew, and Beaulieu, and furnish vessels suitable for the navigation of the Great Ogeechee river; while General Foster should send from Hilton Head siege guns for the reduction of Savannah, and also press his advance against the Charleston and Savannah rail road in the neighborhood of Coosawhatchie.

The evacuation of Savannah having been resolved upon, and it being impossible by means of the few steam boats and river craft at command to convey the garrison, artillery, and requisite stores with convenience and safety to Screven's ferry, orders were issued for the immediate construction of suitable pontoon bridges. The line of retreat, selected by the engineers and adopted upon the evacuation of the city, involved the location of a pontoon bridge extending from the foot of West Broad street to Hutchinson's island,—a distance of about a thousand feet,—a road way across that island in the direction of Pennyworth island,—a second pontoon bridge across the Middle

river,—another road way across Pennyworth island,—and a third pontoon bridge across Back river, the further end of which should rest upon the rice field on the Carolina shore. The route then followed the most substantial and direct rice dam running north, a canal being on one side and a marish rice field on the other. This dam was just wide enough to permit the careful movement of field artillery and army wagons. The plantation bridges along the line of march were to be strengthened to bear the passage of these heavy conveyances.

Lieutenant Colonel Frobel was placed in charge of the work, and executed the trust confided to him with energy and ability. All available rice field flats were collected. These were swung into position with the tide, lashed end to end by means of ropes and stringers running from boat to boat continuously the entire length of the bridge, and were kept in their places by car-wheels—the only anchors which could be procured.\* Above the stringers was a flooring of plank obtained from the city wharves. At eight o'clock on the evening of the 17th the first pontoon bridge, spanning the Savannah river from the foot of West Broad street to Hutchinson's island was completed, and by half past eight o'clock p. m., on Monday the 19th, the remaining bridges were finished and the route was in readiness for the retreat of the Confederate garrison. Heavy fogs, and difficulties encountered in finding and concentrating the requisite number of flats, caused some delay in the execution of this important work; but, in view of the character of the labor and the scarcity of materials, it was consummated with commendable rapidity and in a very substantial manner.

These bridges were builded by sailors from the Confederate Navy and by a detachment from the Georgia militia. Steamboats were employed in collecting the flats and towing them into position. After the Confederate army crossed, these pontoons were cut loose from their moorings and the flats turned adrift. The enemy was thus prevented from pursuing, had such a purpose been entertained.

Having transferred most of his command to the left bank of

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\*The scarcity of flats compelled the engineer in charge to lash them end to end, and not side to side as is usual in the construction of pontoon bridges of this description.

the Savannah, in association with General Young, General Wheeler was actively engaged night and day in holding the enemy in check and in keeping open the Confederate line of retreat to the high ground on the Carolina side. With some six hundred cavalry and a section of light artillery, General Iverson was detached to create a diversion on the right and in the rear of the Federal army.

In front of our western line the enemy was still busily employed in strengthening his position, in erecting new and more formidable field works, in developing additional lines of artillery fire, and in rendering more facile his communication with his right flank. Two regiments of General Geary's division occupied the upper end of Hutchinson's island, and Carman's brigade was pushed forward to Argyle island. The artillery fire increased in intensity; and for several days, commencing on the 15th of December, Beaulieu Battery was shelled by two mortar boats and two gunboats, and by a rifle gun posted on Greene island. On the 16th, the Confederate forces were strengthened by the arrival of General Ferguson's brigade of dismounted cavalry.

The day following General Sherman demanded the surrender of Savannah and its dependent forts, accompanying his summons with the threat that if he should be forced to resort to an assault, or to the slower and surer process of starvation, he would then feel justified in adopting the harshest measures, and that he would make little effort to restrain his army.

To this demand General Hardee returned a prompt and emphatic refusal.

For the bombardment of Savannah at long range the Federals undertook the transfer of heavy guns from Port Royal, from the fleet, and from Fort McAllister. Water transportation to their destination was afforded by the Great Ogeechee river and the Savannah and Ogeechee canal. According to the Federal accounts, during the 18th, 19th and 20th days of December the utmost activity prevailed in the army of investment. Arrangements were being rapidly consummated for the contemplated bombardment and for a combined and powerful assault upon the Confederate lines. Strong works for the heavy guns were constructed at commanding points, and field-guns were masked in some instances within one hundred and fifty

yards of our entrenchments. Light bridges and fascines were accumulated with which to span the deepest portions of the inundated fields, and fill the ditches and canals. It is claimed that everything was in readiness on the evening of the 20th, and that the early capture of the garrison of Savannah was confidently anticipated. General Sherman had left orders that the assault should not be launched until his return, and he had not yet made his appearance. Busied with plans for interrupting the only line of retreat open to the Confederates, he was at Port Royal concerting measures with General Foster for a prompt advance upon the Charleston and Savannah rail road, and was not present with his army when Savannah was evacuated.

The pontoon bridges having been completed, and the line of retreat perfected, carefully digested orders were promulgated by General Hardee for the evacuation of Savannah and its dependent forts and the withdrawal of the Confederate garrison on the night of the 20th of December, 1864.

During the 19th and 20th our artillery and infantry fire was heavier than it had been on any previous days. The hour of evacuation being near at hand, a more liberal expenditure of ammunition was sanctioned, and the fire of our batteries increased at every available point until the shades of night on the 20th settled upon the contending lines. In obedience to instructions from artillery headquarters the ammunition chests of the light batteries were thoroughly replenished, and all available animals were engaged for retiring such of the unattached guns as could be transported. All field guns of inferior calibre were exchanged for superior pieces where they could be secured.

On the evening of the 19th an order was issued for the evacuation of Whitmarsh island. After spiking the guns and destroying the carriages and ammunition at Turner's rocks, Gibson's point, and on the line of the lunettes across the island without attracting the notice of the enemy, the troops from this locality were dispatched over the pontoon bridges across the Savannah river to co-operate with General Wheeler in holding the enemy in check on the Carolina shore. Upon this retreat all bridges connecting Whitmarsh island with the main land were destroyed.

The garrisons from the Savannah river batteries, from Fort Bartow, and from Thunderbolt, having spiked their guns, destroyed the carriages, and thrown all ammunition into water, concentrated at Fort Jackson at 8 o'clock on the evening of the 20th, whence, under the command of Colonel Edward C. Anderson, they were conveyed by steamer to Screven's ferry, marching thence the same night to Hardeeville. They were accompanied by the crew of the Confederate iron-clad Georgia — Captain Gwathmey — that floating battery having been scuttled by her officers. The guns having been spiked, carriages broken, and ammunition destroyed at the Isle of Hope, Beaulieu, and Rose Dew batteries, the garrisons from those points repaired to Savannah and, the same night, crossed the pontoon bridges; the artillerists from Beaulieu and Rose Dew moving forward to Hardeeville, while the dismounted cavalry from the Isle of Hope reported for duty to General Wheeler.

From the western lines our troops were quietly withdrawn in the order and at the hours indicated in the circular issued by Lieutenant General Hardee. There was no confusion, and all movements were executed promptly and in silence. Abandoned guns were spiked, their carriages disabled, and all ammunition destroyed so far as this could be done without attracting the attention of the enemy in our immediate front. To conceal our operations, occasional firing was maintained until the latest moment. Forty-nine pieces of field artillery, with limbers, caissons, forges, battery wagons and baggage wagons, were safely withdrawn and transported over the pontoon bridges.

Without halting in Savannah, the retiring Confederate army pursued its march for Hardeeville, South Carolina, which was designated as the place of rendezvous.

The destruction of the ammunition on the western lines was not commenced until after the withdrawal of the infantry, and was cautiously performed by the artillerists. The guns were not spiked until the last moment. With several rounds of ammunition on hand, they were kept ready for action while the ordnance stores and equipments, which could not be retired, were being rendered useless. •

The field return on the morning of the 20th of December, 1864, showed in the trenches, on detail duty, and in the fixed batteries along the water approaches to the city, an aggregate of 9,089 men of all arms, present for duty.

The Ladies' gun-boat, or iron clad Georgia, was sunk at her moorings abreast of Fort Jackson on the night of the 20th.

The iron clad Savannah, Captain Brent, being unable to proceed to sea in consequence of the torpedoes in the river and a strong gale setting from the northeast, after having, on the morning of the 21st, remained for some time in the neighborhood of Screven's ferry, where a detail was engaged in the removal of some quartermaster and commissary stores, and having returned the artillery fire of the enemy from the Bay, was burnt nearly opposite Willink's ship yard.

The steamers Isondiga and Fire Fly were burned by the Confederates in Back river.

Several gun-boats, which were in process of construction, were consumed by fire while still on the stocks.

The gun-boats Macon, Sampson, and Resolute, had been dispatched up the river prior to the siege, and the Ida had been captured by the enemy.

The gallant Commodore Tattnall, having in person superintended the destruction of most of his vessels, led his sailors and marines to Hardeeville, marching at their head although suffering severely from rheumatism.

In order to deaden the sound, rice straw was thickly strewn over the pontoon bridges. By three o'clock on the morning of the 21st the rear guard of the Confederate army had crossed over to Hutchinson's island and the evacuation was complete. Engineer troops shortly afterwards detached the flats, cutting holes in them and setting them adrift. Lieutenant Colonel Paul, of General Hardee's staff, was ordered by the General at midnight on the 20th to take command of a small force, and, after seeing that the pontoon bridge from the foot of West Broad street to Hutchinson's island was destroyed, to collect such stragglers as he could and cross by way of Screven's ferry. This command was detailed to preserve order in the city to the latest moment.

No disturbances occurred, however, during the night. Just before sunrise he withdrew his pickets, and, having collected all stragglers who were willing to accompany him, embarked on board the steamer Swan for Screven's ferry. As this little boat got fairly under way, the advanced guard of the enemy appeared on the Bay.

During its march over the pontoon bridges, across the rice fields, and until the high ground in South Carolina was reached, the retiring Confederate army encountered no opposition at the hands of the Federals.

The destruction of guns, ammunition, and ordnance stores in the presence of and without attracting the notice of the enemy, the successful withdrawal of the command across the pontoon bridges over the Savannah river, the absence of all noise and confusion during the movement consummated at night, and above all the safe conduct of such a large body of troops, with artillery and wagons, along the narrow rice dams and causeways of the Carolina shore, in a slender column, in close proximity to a strong Federal force extending from Izard's plantation for more than a mile parallel or nearly so with the Confederate line of retreat — and that without loss or interruption — indicate at once the skill and care with which the Confederate commander had arranged his plans, and the excellent behavior of his troops in executing them.

Although, during the night of the 20th General Geary reported to General Williams, commanding the 20th Army Corps, that the Confederate movement across the Savannah river was believed to be in progress, the only instructions issued to division commanders were to keep on the alert and press their pickets closer to the Confederate works. Our fire, maintained until the moment when our forces were withdrawn from the western lines, seems at once to have restrained the enemy and to have confused him with regard to our real intentions.

It was not until half past three o'clock on the morning of the 21st that our abandonment of the western line was discovered. Orders were at once issued to advance the pickets on the left of the Federal lines and to press forward into the city. By six o'clock a. m., General Geary's division had entered without opposition, and the city of Savannah was in the possession of the Federals. Two regiments were detached to occupy Fort Jackson and the works below the city. General Geary was temporarily assigned to the command of Savannah, and his division encamped within the city limits. Near the junction of the Louisville and Augusta roads, and about half-past four o'clock in the morning of the 21st, the Hon. Richard D. Arnold, Mayor of Savannah, and a delegation from the Board of Aldermen,

bearing a flag of truce, met that officer and through him made formal surrender of the city just evacuated by the Confederates.

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Eleven times consecutively, my friends, have you complimented me with the presidency of this Association, and on fourteen special occasions has it been my privilege to address you. Such confidence and distinction, while far transcending the measure of my desert, have been very gratifying to me and will be cherished among the most pleasing recollections of my life. Few ties are so potent as that which unites us as members of this organization,—a tie engendered by obligations unselfish, valorous, and exalted, cemented by acts and memories redolent of patriotism, endurance, and lofty emprise, and dissoluble only by death.

In rendering back this office into your hands, I cordially thank you, my comrades, for your unvarying exhibitions of friendship, and your manifold tokens of generous consideration. I thank you for this signal honor so long conferred; and for each one of you, and for him upon whom your choice of succession may fall I earnestly bespeak every success and happiness.

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